

Muhammad is... the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets... —Holy Qur-án, 33 :
 "There will be no Prophet after me."—Muhammad.

The Islamic Review

Founded by the Late AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

XXV]

JAMĀDA'L-ULĀ, 1356 A.H.

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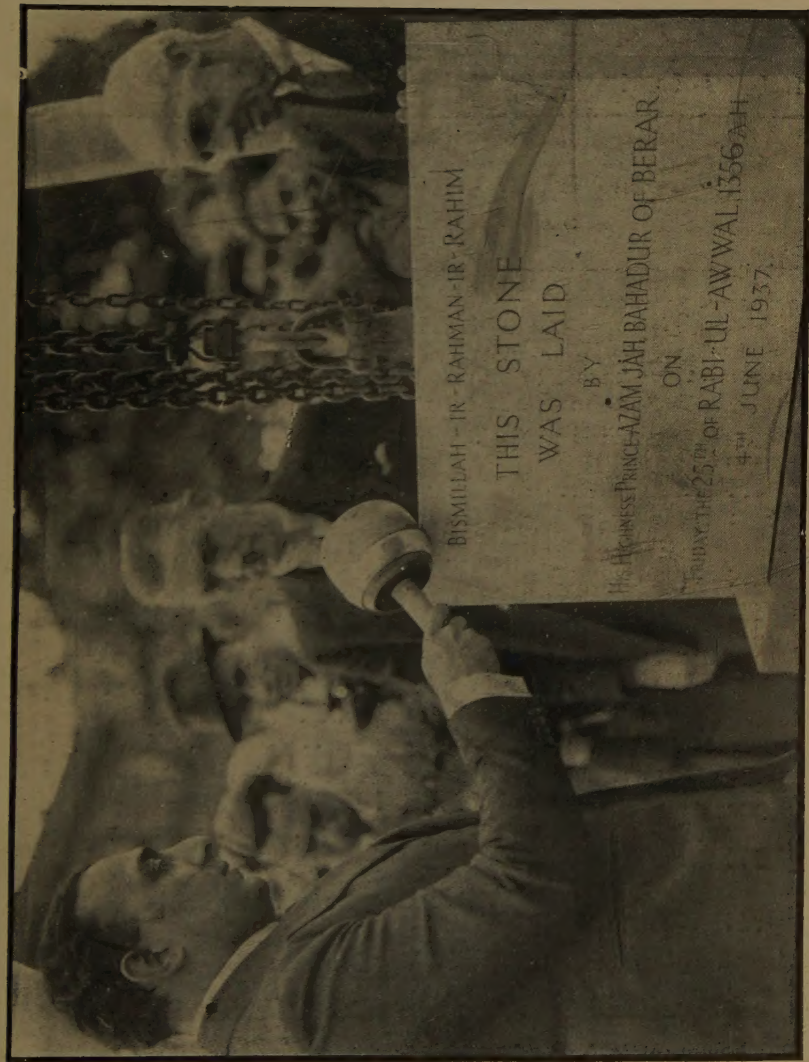
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His Highness Prince Azam Jah Bahadur of Berar laying the foundation stone of the London Nizamiah Mosque, at Mornington Avenue, West Kensington, London on Friday, June 4th 1937.



Their Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Bejar surrounded by the Muslim Community in London after the ceremony.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

VOL. XXV.]

JAMĀDA'L-ŪLĀ, 1356 A.H.

[No. 8.

AUGUST, 1937 A.C.]

A DECLARATION

I (Mrs.) B. Delmar, of Palmer Avenue, Detroit, U.S.A., do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship one and only one Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus and others—and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha il-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul-Allah

[There is but one God (Allah) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

(Sd.) B. DELMAR.

**ADDRESS OF WELCOME TO HIS HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE OF BERAR, PRINCE AZAM
JAH BAHADUR AND HER HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS OF BERAR**

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,

We, the Trustees of the Nizamiah Mosque Trust, have the proud privilege of welcoming Your Highness on this historic and memorable occasion. We are very grateful to Your Highness for acceding to our request to lay the foundation stone of the Mosque which it is proposed to be built in London, and which will commemorate the truly royal munificence of your illustrious father, His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar, and will bear the name of the *Nizamiah* Mosque. We assure Your Highness that the Moslems all over the world appreciate and admire all that His Exalted Highness has done for the progress and prosperity of the great State over which he rules, and for the generous help which has been extended by him, from time to time, to good causes beyond his territories, including the sacred cause of religion.

Our gratification at having Your Highness with us, for performing this auspicious ceremony, is enhanced by the fact that Your Highness is accompanied by your noble consort, Her Highness Begum Durre Shahwar, Princess of Berar, who represents the distinguished house of the Osmanli Caliphs of Islam, who is still regarded with affectionate reverence in Moslem lands. She combines in her personality the cultures of the East and the West, and is known for her devotion to the cause of women. It is difficult to imagine a better instance of

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

Qiran us Saadain (a combination of two auspicious constellations) than we have here to-day, in the personalities of Your Highness and the Princess, and we regard this as a particularly good augury for the success of the Movement which this Trust stands for.

The need of a large Mosque, worthy of this metropolis, which attracts visitors from all parts of the world, and which has now an ever increasing circle of believers in, and sympathizers with, Islam in Great Britain itself, has been felt for a long time. It has been the dream of some of the sincerest well-wishers of Islam to see the minarets of a house of Moslem worship in this great city, and to hear from them the beautiful call to Islamic prayer. The realization of that dream was rendered possible by the fervent zeal of a British nobleman, the late Lord Al-Farooq Headley, who loved Islam and had the courage to profess it openly, at a time when there was a much greater prejudice against it than exists at present. It was his good fortune to approach, with success, His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar, and to find in him a benefactor, who gave the princely donation of sixty thousand pounds (£60,000) for this purpose, and the foundation of this Trust is based mainly on this donation.

The greater part of the Fund constituting this Trust is invested in Securities, and the rest is deposited in Banks, including the Imperial Bank of India at Hyderabad. Twenty-eight thousand pounds were spent in procuring the extensive site of land where we have met to-day. There has been great delay in starting work on the scheme, owing to various reasons which have been explained on various occasions, and into which this is not the time or the place to enter. The delay, though regrettable, has ended in at least one good result, that we have now the privilege of having Your Highness

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associated with this scheme, and of securing your personal interest in it.

We propose to adopt a plan, less ambitious than the one which was originally prepared, and for which the existing funds are not sufficient. We shall try to build the essential parts of the Mosque with the money in the hands of the Trust, leaving room for further expansion of the building when more funds become available. It has, however, to be borne in mind that the real requirements of the Mosque, as a centre of worship and of valuable cultural contacts, will begin when the building is completed, as money will be needed for its upkeep and for the provision of a resident Imam to lead the prayers, and the most suitable way of meeting these needs will be the creating of a permanent fund for the purpose, the income of which may be devoted to the purposes indicated above.

Before concluding this Address we may be permitted to add that it is a great pleasure to us that the Right Honourable Sir Akbar Hydari, the distinguished statesman who has guided the finances of Hyderabad with such conspicuous ability for so many years, and who now occupies the highest place in its administration as the President of Council, is with Your Highness on this occasion, and we hope that the Nizamiah Mosque Trust will enjoy his sympathy and support.

We remain,

Your Highness's Humble Servants,

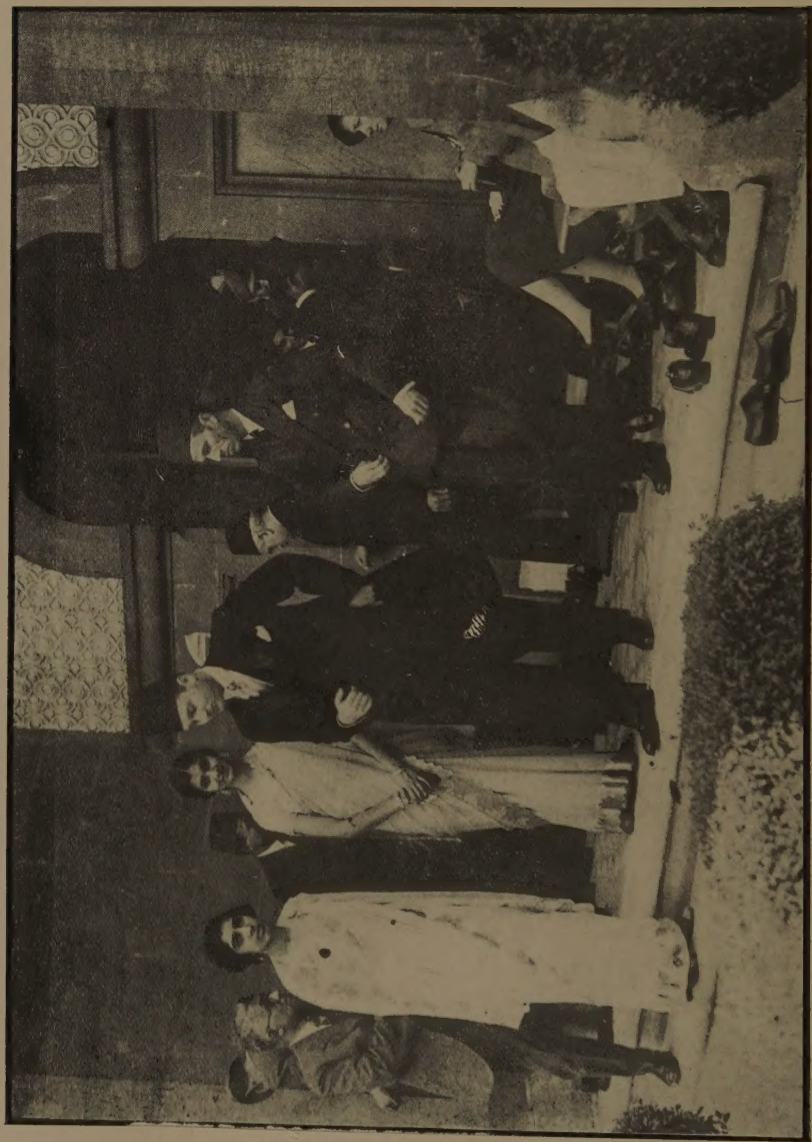
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His Majesty King Faruque of Egypt leaving the Mosque after Friday Prayers on 28th May, 1937.

A FRIDAY SERMON

A FRIDAY SERMON*

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

"Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men wrought, that We may make them taste a part of that which they have done, so that they may turn (to God). Say: Travel in the land, and see the end of those before; most of them were polytheists. And set thyself upright to the right course before there comes from God the day that cannot be averted; on that day they shall be separated. Whoever disbelieves, on him is his disbelief; and whoever does good, he prepares (good) for his own soul."—The Holy Qur-ân, Ch. 30:41—43.

Believers,—I do not know how many of you are aware of how critical is the time we are facing, as members of the civilized nations of the world. It does not need much probing of our consciences to realize that we Muslims of late have been more or less passive spectators of the world's current of affairs. We are no longer the leaders of humanity's urge for life as we were till the time the West responded to a new call of life some three centuries ago. The world seems to have progressed in several directions since our retirement, but it is an open secret that, with all its outward brilliance, the inner social structure of the Western civilization is in an awful condition—perhaps no other civilization has ever before found such elements of disruption in its body-politic.

We should recall that our chief, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, appeared at a time very similar to the present times. The majestic civilization of Rome, in spite of the efforts of Christianity, was a poor effigy of its past glory, and the other civilization of the world, both in the East as well as in the West, were, except in name, decomposed. It was not that intellectual power was lacking in those great and ancient nations, but that the spiritual light that clarifies man's emotions was lost from their midst.

The Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and the blessings of God be upon him!) supplied this spiritual light, and that corruption which had appeared on land and sea gave place to a healthy growth and co-ordination. The dying embers of all the different civilizations were

* Delivered at the Mosque, Woking, on the 28th of May, 1937. His Majesty King Faruque of Egypt was in the congregation.

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once more revived, and humanity, in spite of its minor conflicts, marched along the path of cultural achievements.

It is difficult to say when we, Muslims, ceased to transmit our spiritual energy to humanity. Perhaps we continued to work as the power-house of this energy till a considerable time after our political fall. It is nevertheless true that, of late, rather than thinking of giving something to the West, some of us have even come to regard the West as the only source of all life and energy. Nothing can be sadder than this for humanity. I assure you, brothers and sisters, that the inner perception of the West has almost realized that it is the spiritual vision and social emotions of the Islamic peoples that can save the present civilization from a tragic collapse.

In view of all this, it would not be Muslim-like to sit silent over this matter. We must bear in mind the rôle given to us by the Book of God—

كذلك جعلكم أمة وسطا لتكونوا شهداء على الناس
ويكون الرسول عليكم شهيدا

“And thus We have made you an exalted nation that you may be the bearers of witness to the people, and that the Prophet may be a bearer of witness to you.”

Muhammad was the last Prophet, and yet he could not live for ever. The world was to face crises time and again. Who then in the absence of the Prophet must act as the mouthpieces of God? To this question the Qur-án replies clearly—the followers of the Prophet. The Prophet has left us not only the requisite material for world reconstruction in the Qur-ánic teachings, but also his shining and living example—an example more historically living than that of any other person who has lived or can ever live. Indeed, the duty of furnishing humanity with the necessary principles and emotions devolves on us, the Muslims. World civilization is once more on the verge of a collapse, and the call to us is, therefore, urgent.

ISLAM—A MESSAGE OF PEACE

ISLAM—A MESSAGE OF PEACE

By C. A. SOORMA

(Continued from Vol. XXV, Page 249.)

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY LIFE OF THE PROPHET

The Quraish who were a powerful tribe had been the custodians of the *Kaaba* for several decades prior to Islam.

The grandfather of the Prophet was Abd-ul-Muttalib. He had succeeded as the virtual head of the Meccan Commonwealth. Abd-ul-Muttalib was blessed with a numerous progeny. His best beloved son was Abdulla. Abdulla was married to Amina, a daughter of Wahab, the chief of the family of Zohair. Abdulla died in the course of a journey to Yathrib (Medina) in the 25th year of his age, and a few days afterwards, Amina gave birth to a son who was named Muhammad, which, translated, means "the one who is praised."

Muhammad was born on the 20th August, 570 A.C., or on the 12th Rabi I in the year of the Elephant. When Muhammad was only 6 years of age, he lost his devoted mother and this irreparable loss made a deep impression upon the mind of the sensitive child. After her death, the care of this doubly-orphaned child was thrown upon his grandfather Abd-ul-Muttalib. During the few years that he survived the mother, he watched his grandson with the utmost care and tenderness. On his death-bed, the old grandfather had confided to Abu-Talib the charge of his brother's child, and in the house of Abu-Talib the Prophet passed his early life.

How well Ameer Ali has described the childhood of the Prophet:

"We can almost see the lad with deep wistful eyes, earnest and thoughtful, looking, as it were, into futurity,

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moving about in the humble unpretentious household of his uncle or going often into the desert to gaze upon the beauteous face of Nature; sweet and gentle of disposition, painfully sensitive to human suffering, this pure-hearted child of the desert was the beloved of his small circle, and there ever existed the warmest attachment between uncle and nephew." (Ameer Ali; *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.)

In later life, the Prophet used to say that "the angels of God had opened out his (Abu-Talib's) heart and filled it with light!"

The child Muhammad had often to go into the desert to watch the flocks of his uncle.

As he grew up, the Prophet earned for himself the enviable title of "*Al-Amin*" or "the trustworthy." In his youth, the Prophet had kept himself strictly aloof from the vicious manners and habits of his people. He led a chaste, pure and simple life. To him, nothing was of importance except the majesty, grandeur and beauty of Nature. The dawn of every day and the birth of every night, the rise of the sun, the moon and the stars, light and darkness—all these phenomena made an everlasting impression on his mind. In their contemplation, he derived much solace and comfort, and it is said that he often repaired himself to one or other of the caves near Mecca. There, in solitude, he would contemplate for hours together, on the majesty and mystery of Dame Nature. To the Prophet of Islam, Nature herself was a miracle. How well the following lines of Shakespeare describe the message which Nature conveyed to him:

"Tongues in trees, Books in running brooks
Sermons in stones and good in everything."

The Prophet never received any education in the modern sense of the term. He was called an "*Ummy*" or an illiterate by his people. Ignorant though he may

THE QURANIC CONCEPTION OF GOD

have been of reading and writing, nonetheless his mind and senses were attuned to receive and appreciate a far higher education than what mere letters could give. It was the education of self and the study of Nature which he prized most and, in my opinion, it was this trait in his character which contributed so much to his success in later life.

When the Prophet reached manhood, he sought employment from a Quraish lady, named Khadija who was a kinswoman of his. When he was about 25 years old, he travelled once more to Syria on behalf of his employer Khadija. He discharged his duties faithfully and well. Khadija had always been impressed by the truthfulness and personality of the Prophet. She was about 15 years older than him, but admiration for him had become so profound that a marriage was subsequently arranged between them and solemnised amidst great rejoicings.

THE QURANIC CONCEPTION OF GOD

BY THE HON'BLE SHEIKH MUSHIR HUSSAIN KIDWAI
OF GADIA, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

(Continued from Vol. XXV, Page 261)

The moral tone of Muslim Society and civilization was set by the Quranic verses as follows:

“And help one another, in virtue and piety, and do not help one another, in sin and transgression; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is severe in requiting evil. V: 2.

“Lo, Allah enjoins justice, and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk; and forbids lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He admonishes you, that you may be mindful.” XVI: 19.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

"Surely Allah is with those who guard (against evil), and those who do good (to others)." XCI: 128.

"The believers are but brothers, therefore make peace between your brethren, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah that mercy may be bestowed on you." XLIX: 10.

"Oh, you who believe; Let not a community deride another community; perchance they may be better than themselves; nor let women laugh at (other) women, perchance they may be better than themselves; nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nickname. Bad is the name of lewdness after faith, and who does not turn (in repentance or apology), such are the unjust." XLLX: 11.

"Oh, you who believe, avoid most suspicions, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy, or pry (into others' affairs) nor let some of you backbite others. Does anyone of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you would abhor that (so why not abhor the other). And be careful of (your duty to) Allah. Surely Allah is relenting, merciful." XLIX: 12.

"And follow not that, of which you have not the knowledge; surely the hearing and the sight and the heart, all of these shall be questioned about it." XVII: 36.

"And not alike are the good deed and the evil deed. Repel the evil deed with one which is better; then lo, he, between whom and those there was enmity (will become) as though he were a warm friend.

"But none attain to this save men steadfast in patience, and none attain to this save the possessors of great good fortune." XLI: 34, 35.

"The requital of an ill-deed is punishment the like thereof: but whoever forgiveth and reformeth (the ill-

THE QURANIC CONCEPTION OF GOD

doer) thereby, he shall have his reward from Allah; surely (Allah) loveth not wrong-doers." XLII:40.

"And there is life for you in (the law of retaliation), O men of understanding, that ye may ward off (evil)." II: 179.

"And surely we shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth, and lives, and fruits, but bear glad tidings to the patient.

"Who when a misfortune befallerh them say: 'We are Allah's and unto Him shall we return.'

"Such are they on whom are blessings from their Lord, and mercy: and these—they are the rightly guided." II: 154-155.

Muslim civilization had no room for street women or for men of licentious habits. It had no need for "Barnardo Homes," and "Penitentiaries." "Unmarried mothers" and "war babies," both were unknown to Muslim civilization. Passion-exciting Tango dances or "nudist" dresses were disallowed. Animal-like, free intermixing of sexes was discouraged. Public decency was strongly urged. Gambling was not permitted. Drunkenness was stopped.

While Bolshevism, like Islam, has purged human society and civilization of exploiters, "corner-makers," monopolists, bloodsucking, usurious capitalists and leechlike dukes, drunken lords, slave-drivers and merciless sweating employers; unlike Islam it has failed to purge civilization of drunkenness, debauchery and gambling, which Rev. Taylor calls "the three curses of Christian lands." On the contrary, Bolshevism in this respect has followed Christianity, not Islam. Instead of removing these vices from modern civilization Bolshevism has, by its own lack of morality, increased them. Bolshevised Russia is much worse in this respect than any Christian land.

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"There are," writes a pro-Bolshevist eye-witness (Marcus Hindus), "nation-wide complaints of drunkenness of proletarians . . . and even of petty larceny . . . sex life is now nowhere regulated by law in Russia. There is no adultery in the Russian legal code . . . virginity topples down like a heap of snow by a rock . . . chastity as a principle and a practice, as a canon and a custom, in and of itself, ceases in Russia to have any meaning, any virtue, any glory. . . ."

"Groups of youth plunged into an orgy of excess. They did not care. They had no God to frighten them. They had no parents to control them. They had no public opinion to bother about. They had only immediate impulse to consider. They did not stop to weigh the consequences—personal or social. . . ."

"The Russians are in danger of sinking into a morass of 'animality.' There are women in Russia who make a practice of inveighing high salaried men into cohabitation so that they can receive fat allowances for the child and when they have snared several such men they are assured of a good income and their worries are over. . . . Indeed the attempt to reforge the sex morality and family relations . . . has whirled to the surface of Russian life a host of monstrosities. . . ."

"It is unsafe to leave anything unguarded in one's seat even for a brief enough period to buy a newspaper or an apple. Typewriters and suit-cases have to be buckled with chain to the arm. . . ."

"Often there is a communist who does not hesitate to use his privileged position to settle a personal grudge or extort for himself benefits at the expense of others."

SIGNIFICANCE OF PRAYER IN ISLAM

So if they are fair, the Bolsheviks must acknowledge their inferiority to Muslims as Christians like the Revs. Taylor and Stephens have admitted that "Islam has done more for civilization than Christianity."

Stanley Lane-Poole says: "Students flocked from France, Germany and England and drank from the fountain of learning which flowed only in the cities of the Moors. . . . In the practice of war no less than in arts of peace they long stood supreme." He further says: "Whatsoever makes a kingdom great and prosperous, whatsoever tends to refinement and civilization was found in Muslim Spain."

EXOTERIC AND ESOTERIC SIGNIFICANCE OF PRAYER IN ISLAM

BY KHAN BAHADUR HAJI B. M. K. LODI

PART I

GENERAL

In the minimum definition of *Religion*, two things are implied: (1) A belief in a Being higher than man, higher than all; (2) a worship of that Being. Such a creed is primitive, as primitive as man, as old as his self-consciousness, and as natural as he is religiously constituted. "In the world, there is nothing so great as *man*; in man, there is nothing so great as *mind*; and in the mind of man, there is nothing so great as the *idea of God*." So said Sir William Hamilton.

A belief in a Providence, Supreme in Will, Power and Dispensation, generated in man, as it ought, a feeling of 'reverence' and 'awe' towards that Providence. Scriptural accounts apart, the feeling of the 'fear' of God is traced by Antiquarians, like Professor Scott Elliott, to the remotest antiquity—it was lurking in the

mind of 'Pre-Historic' man. That which grew out of 'fear' is what in religious terminology is called 'worship.' ("The Story of Creation," by Edward Claud.) In other words, the primitive germs of worship lay in 'fear.' Hence the aphorism: "The first maker of God is fear." 'Faith' was followed by 'fear,' and fear by 'worship,' and the triad of faith, fear and worship constituted the original framework of religion.

'Worship' is thus the culminating expression of man's desire to realize God and to be in communion with Him. It is an attitude representing on the part of the worshipper:

(1) Dependence on a Power higher than himself, for help and guidance; (2) Fear of that Power; (3) Humility in the presence of that Power; (4) Reverence of that Power culminating in love; (5) Hope of mercy; (6) A feeling of remorse and regret for omissions and commissions; (7) Repentance. These are the principal component parts of the system of 'worship,' the cumulative effect of which is conceived to bring man nearer to God, and to enable him to approach the *sanctum sanctorum* as a child approaches a father. There is, however, a 'Veil' between man and God, and that veil is his physical and mortal frame. He realizes that no perishable creation can have access to the holy precincts of the Immortal Creator, without an instrument to penetrate the veil; and this instrument is his *mind*. Only mind can ascend up to and approach the Higher mind. Both can meet, and converse with one another. One prays and praises and begs, and the Other blesses. This drawing together of the two—their intercourse, their conversation—is known in religion as *Prayer*. Prayer may be likened to a ladder for the ascent of man's mind to God and is "a sovereign remedy to set the heart at rest." (Qur-án, XIII:28.) In prayer,

SIGNIFICANCE OF PRAYER IN ISLAM

there is also *comfort*, there is strength to bear trials and tribulations. (Qur-án, XX:130.) Prayer is called *Ibadat* in Arabic. This is a word pregnant with meaning, a characteristic of the copiousness of the Arabic Vocabulary or of the peculiarity of the language in possessing "words of suggestive and meaningful nature." The original root is *Abd*, meaning a 'slave,' and the whole of mankind, as the slaves and creatures of God, the Creator, are denominated *al-'Ibäd'* in Arabic. A slave or a servant dare not present himself before his master for service without first setting aside his own 'ego' or 'entity.' The primary significance of the word 'Ibadat' is "to get a thing powdered." In order that some things may change their form, it is necessary for them first to be reduced to powder. Similarly, before assuming any resemblance to the Higher Self, one's own self must be brought to the dust, and this is what is further implied in the etymology of 'Ibadat.' In its broader sense, it includes also service to humanity: for, in serving others, one is sacrificing one's self. This is briefly the origin and primary significance of prayer. Let us next devote our attention to the study of some of its general principles and general aspects.

In praying, man must believe that He Whom he seeks is "nearer to him than his jugular vein," (Qur-án 50:16.)

That "He is with him wherever he may be" (LVII: 5), that He is thus present before him, that he is seeing Him; if not, He is seeing him and hearing his prayer (Tradition). Realize that God is your 'Co-sitter' in your prayer, and you are lost in Him; you become absorbed in the Prayer and in the Prayed so much absorbed as to forget yourself entirely and to become oblivious of your 'self,' nay, of the world itself, while your mind becomes perfectly blank, losing all its

worldly activities and becoming filled wholly with the thought of God. It is but a natural attitude of the mind, and there is nothing extraordinary about it. Take, for example, a person who is engaged in a serious conversation with another. He misses the sound of the clock opposite to him striking the hour; the report of the firing of a gun, though within the range of his hearing, fails to catch his ears; and the noise of a train passing by him, nay, the passage of the train itself, escapes his notice. While such is the absorption of finite minds in matters mundane, how much more will they become absorbed when they are conscious of being in the presence of, and engaged with, the Infinite—the Lord of all. No wonder, therefore, if, in these circumstances, one becomes forgetful of one's 'self,' and sacrifices it at the altar of the Higher self. "Pray unto thy Lord, and make a Sacrifice," are the Qur-ánic words (CVIII: 2). A 'Sacrifice,' whether for material or spiritual purposes, has its own reward.

More impressive, effective and fruitful becomes a prayer that is performed in *Secret* (Qur-án, VII: 55), when feelings of sincerity and love, feelings of fear and hope, become supreme (Qur-án, XXI: 90) and tend to push the prayer nearer and nearer to its destination. Besides, it is natural that one will open one's mind freely before another only when one sees no others. Similarly, he who prays in secret—lonely and undisturbed—can fasten his mind upon God without any reserve, and represent to Him whatever he feels in his innermost being. He fears Him, he praises Him, he glorifies Him, he begs of Him, he even sheds his tears in repentance for his negligence—all of which he cannot do in the presence of others. As a result, he is not only "forgiven but amply rewarded" (Qur-án, LXVII: 12). *Night* favours these results. During the night-time, particularly when one awakes from one's sleep after midnight

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and feels refreshed, and when "divine peace rests on Creation and all nature is lifted up to its Lord," the mind becomes void of worldly cares and anxieties, and is open to function in the way in which it is directed. That is why a late night-prayer called 'Salât-ul-lail,' popularly known as *Tahajjud*, is recommended in the Qur-án (XVII: 79). This is beyond what is incumbent; that is, over and above the five times' 'salat'. The word 'Tahajjud' is derived from 'Hajd' meaning 'to be awake' and, secondarily, 'to wake from sleep' for the purpose of prayer. It is indeed no light task to sacrifice sleep, particularly while it is very sound in the latter part of the night, but the effect is beyond proportion, far exceeding popular appreciation, incalculable for a popular estimate, and, in fact, above human conception. "Your Lord will raise you to a position of great glory" are the words of Allah, with which the Qur-ánic verse recommending the prayer ends. The extraordinary nature of reward, material as well as spiritual, promised in the Qur-án in return for 'Tahajjud' can only be conceived, realized and appreciated by those who have made the prayer their second nature, and it is inexpressible in words to others.

Furthermore, spiritually. The Prophet of Islam said that three things in this world have been made beloved for him, of which 'Prayer' is one (Nasái). Deep is the significance of the saying. He loved 'Prayer,' because it secured for him "the coolness of his eyes." What is this coolness? Is it a coolness which we usually understand by the word in this material world? No. It is a *Spiritual* coolness. One can obtain an explanation, and a rational one too, from Ibn-ul-Arabi, the "Shelley of Muslim Philosophers" and the "greatest Mystic of the Muslim East," in his "Fus-us-al-Hikam," though his explanation may be a little mystic in character. The substance of it may, however, be put in these

words: it is a 'coolness' that is derived from the nearness of God (Qurb-i-Ilahi), from a conversation with God, and, above all, from the vision of God. No more exalted blessing and happiness can be conceived in this world or in the next, and this is achieved at the stage of 'Prostration' (sújúd) in Prayer. It is prostration that draws a man nearer to God. "Prostrate thyself and draw near" (unto Allah), is the word of God (XCVI: 19). It is in the Tradition of the Prophet that in the stage of prostration lies *Mi'ráj* for ordinary mortals. 'Mi'ráj' was the Prophet's 'night journey' (Qur-án XVII: 1), the journey of the soul, while in a state of 'cosmic-consciousness'—a heavenly blessing granted by Providence in order to show the Prophet some of His signs as stated in the Qur-ánic verse quoted above.

"Prostration" is that last stage in Islamic prayer, that extreme attitude of both mind and body which represents the lowest and humblest position a servant can assume before his master. It is a position which Satan (Iblis), in his conceited and fiery mould, never consented to assume and became a rebel. While 'Prostration' became thus the greatest enemy of Satan, it proved to be the greatest blessing for man. To defeat the devil is to love a thing which he hates, and to hate a thing which he loves.

Realizing, as he did, the end and effect of 'Prayer,' especially of *Sújúd*, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) used to become a different man altogether while in prayer; he used to become a non-cognizant of himself. It is related (Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-ul Wadu) that, when the Prophet was one day saying his prayers in the Mecca-Mosque and was prostrated, a certain villain at the instance of Abu Jahal, an avowed enemy of the Prophet, placed the entrails of a slaughtered camel on the Prophet's neck and shoulders. The Prophet was so absorbed in prayer that he did not feel this until

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it was noticed and removed by his young daughter Fatima of blessed memory. There is a similarly remarkable and soul-stirring episode in the life of Hazrat Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law. Once he was wounded by an arrow, and the arrow stuck so deep into the body that all attempts to extricate it failed, as its removal would have entailed extreme pain. He suggested its removal while he was in prayer, and this was done. We are also told that the foot of a Muslim Saint had to be amputated for gangrene while he was in prayer. Instances of this kind may be multiplied. In all these cases, what was it that acted as chloroform? It was the entire absorption of the minds of the men in the thought and observance of God. Their condition may also be compared to that of a lover in the presence of his beloved.

The fountain-head from which these feelings and emotions flow is the *heart*, and they flow freely provided the heart is pure, sincere and devoted. It is only then that it carries the prayer to the Prayed, and links them both together. "A pure heart penetrates Heaven" (Thomas à Kempis). "Words without thoughts never to heaven go," said the King in Shakespeare's "Hamlet"—and, in the words of Sir Muhammad Iqbal, one of the most learned philosophers and poets of India, "Words (thought) emanating from the innermost recesses of the heart possess the potentialities of producing wonderful effect; they have not the wings of birds, and yet they can fly." Intuitive are these utterances, but they are also in harmony with experience and science. Mere lip-repetition of praises and prayer never brings good, any more than a man can taste sweetness by repeating the word "sugar." Then again it is said that the 'mind' is the wireless, and that the brain, as centre of energy, throws off vibrations or 'waves' of a kind similar to those generated in a wireless set. The more intense

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and concentrated is the thinking, the more powerful are the waves. Wireless messages travel at an inconceivable speed of 186,000 miles a second. But God is not far. "He is very near" (Qur-án, 2:186). He "is with us wherever we are" (Qur-án, 5:7). He is with the wireless mind. Whereas Professor Tyndall, the famous wireless inventor, endeavoured in vain to establish through science that prayer has no efficacy, Marchese Marconi has, by availing himself of the same science, announced some time ago that "Prayer may one day prove to be a scientific reality." His is merely an anticipation, based on a scientific analysis, while the Qur-án repeatedly declared it a reality 1350 years ago:

- (1) "Remember Me, and I will remember you."
(2:152).
- (2) "I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls unto Me." (2:186).
- (3) "Pray unto Me, and I will hear your prayer."
(40:60), and so on.

It should, however, be remembered that the results emanating from the remembrance of God vary, and must vary, with the degree of thinking—proportionate to the identity or otherwise of the thought bestowed. God inspired Muhammad to say: "I am as man thinks of Me; let him think as he pleases." (Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Furqan). In other words, God thinks of us in the same way as we think of Him, an idea which a Persian poet has put gracefully: "If you think of God in a manner becoming you, He will think of you as becomes Him." There is another inspired Tradition of the Prophet: "Whosoever seeketh to approach Me one span, I seek to approach him one cubit; whosoever seeketh to approach Me one cubit, I seek to approach him one fathom; and whosoever walketh towards Me, I run towards him." In other words, God seeks man more than

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man seeks God. Can man then be "unmindful" of prayer (Qur-án, 107:5), any more than of his food? Prayer is his *spiritual* food, the food of his soul (Fariduddin-Attar). It is as essential for spiritual growth as, if not more than, the food which is required for his bodily growth. To be "unmindful," to be heedless of prayer is interpreted not only to mean to neglect prayer altogether, but to be "superficial" in praying, that is, to pray with no inner meaning, to pray with no sincerity. "Woe unto worshippers who are heedless of Prayer" (Qur-án 107:4 and 5).

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BY THE HONOURABLE MR. M. T. AKBAR, K.C.

At a recent gathering of Muslims in London assembled together to mark a religious occasion, Lord Zetland remarked that the Muslims were safe as regards their religion, for they had now passed the stage of merely acting on the defensive. If one reads a book like "Whither Islam?" containing a symposium of the views of distinguished Orientalists compiled by Professor Gibbs, one will be able to appreciate this expression of opinion of the noble Lord. Of all the religions of the World, Islam has been the subject of hostile criticism for centuries since the time of the Crusades. Often the criticism has been unfair and incidents have even been fabricated to make the religion grotesque. At other times the criticism has been affected by bigotry, and wilful, deliberate misunderstanding. We, Muslims, do not complain, for all this is due to the decree of God for our good and for the good of the rest of the World.

The cause for all this bitterness is, of course, attributable to the eternal defects of human nature, especially as Islam was regarded as a successful religion. The bitterness became concentrated and organized when Turkey lay dying after the Treaty of Sevres. Money came pouring in to found Colleges and Universities for the purpose of civilizing the Muslims, in all the Muslim countries, and the spread of education and for propaganda. The year 1920 was the beginning of the crisis when it was hoped that that would be the last

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that one would hear seriously of Islam. But by a strange mischance, there was a store of vitality in the religion, which was undreamt of by these torch-bearers of civilisation, for the very simple reason that the Qur-án itself advocated the active acquisition of knowledge as the only means of understanding the unity, the sublimity, the Power and the Transcendence of God and His Personality. There was also the further reason that Islam was in no way antagonistic to any other religion. So that by the inscrutable decree of the Almighty, the opponents of Islam supplied the very antidote, for lack of which the vitality and spirit of the Muslims all over the World had been sapped for centuries.

Having lost seemingly almost all the political power in the World, but nevertheless having acquired the knowledge and culture of the age, the Muslims, as a matter of defence, began studying their own religion from a new angle and they discovered, what they had apparently forgotten for the time being, that the Holy Qur-án was a complete and effective reply for all manner of attacks and criticisms and that it was plastic and elastic enough to meet and deal with all changing conditions. The very fact that all over the Muslim World the Holy Prophet's birthday is now marked by public celebrations of the kind we have had recently, is all a part of the defence alluded to by Lord Zetland.

All the criticisms have been successfully met and the Muslims have even carried the war into the enemy's country, for attack is sometimes the best defence. But I am glad that the counter-criticism has always been conducted, excepting in very rare cases, by Muslims in the spirit indicated by the Holy Qur-án, namely in kindly disputation, by an appeal to reason and not by vituperation. Muslims all over the World have spoken and written about the past glories of Islam, its rapid rise, its culture, its stern code of ethics, its solidarity, the courage

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and patience of Muslims in misfortune and suffering, and, above all, the unbending allegiance of its votaries to the great Prophet of Islam and his sublime morality.

The time has now come, however, if we follow the hint given by Lord Zetland, for us Muslims, now that we have successfully defended our Faith, to set our house in order; that is to say, to reconstruct religious thought in Islam in accordance with modern ideas but in keeping at the same time with the clear faith of Islam as recorded in Qur-án and the *Sunna* of the Prophet. This is a duty which we Muslims must perform according to the Qur-án. In the very first verse revealed to the Prophet on Mount Hira by God, the spread of reading, writing, knowledge and the Sciences is clearly indicated. The whole of mankind is spoken of as a single nation and the Holy Prophet is designated as a mercy to the whole Universe and not to one nation. God is described as the *Rabbil'alameen* and as giving not only physical sustenance but also spiritual sustenance to all the Nations of the World. Says the Qur-án: "Every Nation had an apostle" and the Prophet was sent to verify all that former apostles had taught to their followers.

It will thus be seen that the Qur-án indicates that the World will be drawn and knit closer together. In spite of the passing modern phase of intense local nationalism, there can be no doubt that the discoveries of science and their practical applications are drawing the World closer and closer and the distances between continents are being gradually bridged. The use of Steam Engines, Electricity, the Aeroplane, Telephony, Telegraphy, Wireless and Television shows this process occurring in serial time. The modern economic situation has brought home to us how closely welded the whole world is and how the welfare or misfortune of one part of the Globe affects the other. There is another

aspect to this reference in the Qur-án that all humanity is one, namely that it is not possible for one group of human beings in a particular age to live in a water-tight compartment of its own and to ignore all the cultural achievements of their fellow beings summed up and brought to a focus at that particular age. That is why Sufi-ism was a living force so long as it took account of and embodied the living thought of all Nations brought up-to-date and why it is now a spent force, simply because the later Sufi teachers were not true to the grand truth preached in the Qur-án.

The time has now come for the Muslim Intelligentsia to take into account all the wealth that has been discovered and gathered and garnered in the domain of Science, knowledge, culture and, above all, philosophy, to get a correct interpretation of the Qur-án according to the intellectual progress of the Modern Age.

Islam is a living religion and the Qur-án says that God is at every instant in a state of creation. Several pioneers have already appeared over the Muslim horizon, notably in Turkey, Egypt and India. I need only refer to the epoch-making lectures of that great Muslim poet and philosopher, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, on the reconstruction of religious thought in Islam which I am sure all Muslims have read and re-read. He there follows the examples of the great Muslim Sufi-saints, notably Ghazzali and Al-Arabi, and gives a rational interpretation of the Qur-án according to the logic and methods of thought of the world of thought as it then was. What strikes one forcibly is the elasticity of the Qur-án and its power to meet the altering conditions of the world. There are several points in Iqbal's lectures on which there may be a difference of opinion, as the writer himself admits that he is not *au fait* with all the latest theories in psychology and philosophy. For instance,

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few Muslims will agree with his discourse on God's fore-knowledge and man's free will in which he tries to limit God's eternal knowledge. If any of my readers will only read the Gifford's lectures on the World and the Individual by Professor Royce, they will understand how God's fore-knowledge can be logically reconciled with man's free will. They will also understand many of the problems referred to in the Qur-án, *e.g.*, the repeated reference to rhythm and time as indications of the unity of God; how temporal or serial time is related to eternity; and why God in the Holy Qur-án has Personality and why He is both Transcendent and Imminent. The Truth indicated in the Qur-án that man was made and endowed with free will for a moral purpose to enable him to attain perfection and individuality in the Absolute Life will also become clear. Professor Royce also explains why the doctrine of *Karma* cannot have place in a religion based on God and that man was created to attain personality through tribulation and suffering.

In this reasoning, as shown in the Qur-án, hell and heaven must be interpreted in an allegorical sense, man having to traverse other stages after death, till he attains his *ego-hood* in the Absolute Life. In the words of the Qur-án the Absolute Life is referred to as the stage where nothing exists except the face of God. In yet another phrase, uttered by Muslims at every burial, "In truth we all belong to God and to God will all return ultimately."

This process of reconstruction is, of course, most difficult, but it is not so formidable as one would at first think. The essential features of Islam are clear-cut and unmistakable. There are certain things that a Muslim must do and there are certain other things he must not do. For instance, among the latter, intoxicants, illicit pleasures, gambling, the promiscuous gathering of both

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sexes, usury, etc., are absolutely forbidden, but in every action it is the intention that counts. The space at my disposal will not allow me to pursue this aspect of Islam further. What I would like to impress on my co-religionists is that we must not be disheartened at our total loss of political power all over the Globe almost at one stroke. That is a decree of God and is meant for our ultimate good. God is just and the Qur-án repeatedly says that God does not change man's condition unless man himself does so first of his own accord. I would also ask them not to take too much to heart and to bear patiently the covert hints, attack and ridicule which are often heaped on Islam and the personality of our Holy Prophet. The world will come to understand fully his greatness and stature in course of time. Even that delightful writer, "Sapper," uses the name of Allah often in ridicule and it is a common phrase to refer to our Prophet and the mountain even in ordinary conversation.

All these are indications that faith and religion are steadily losing ground among those who laugh at us. Communism, Fascism and many other isms are taking heavy toll—since 1920, be it marked—of the civilised world and it is becoming quite clear that civilisation has gone awry. If any one doubts this he need only read a book like Dr. Alexis Carell's "Man the Unknown," which won the Nobel Prize last year. As regards the impression created by Islam on the modern European mind, one has only to read books written by such writers as Paul Brunton, Yeats-Brown, E. M. Forster, Lady Evelyn Cobbold, Lord Headley, Weiss and, last but not least, by the Danish convert to Islam, Holmboe, in the "Desert Encounter." Muslims should make it a point to read this last book to understand the truth or otherwise of Mussolini's claim to be the Protector of Islam,

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from the manner in which he set about to reduce Libya and Cyrenaica. Apparently Mussolini forgets that Islam means submission to God's Will and that, therefore, the only Protector of Islam is God and no other. Let me wind up by quoting a few passages from the "Desert Encounter." Asked for reasons for his conversion to Islam, the author replied as follows: "Oh, there are many reasons. First of all, I saw how Islam preached that you must live according to your religion. Other religions demand faith in fossilized dogmas; secondly, I consider Islam to be the only religion which will be able to survive our modern times. It is clear and concise, tolerant towards everybody as long as they do not deny God and it grips you because you soon find out that following it leads you onwards."

The following is part of a conversation between the exiled chief of the *Senoussis* and the author:

"Senoussi taught that a prayer should not be recited unless it is acted upon, that you should live according to what the Prophet preached, and then you will achieve a state of happiness which can be likened to Paradise on Earth. By living according to religion the image of God in your heart grows."

"The Senoussi only aims at piety and nobility of heart. And how shall this be attained? By excluding everything but God from our thoughts, by moderation, and by abstaining from all enjoyments which do not bring us nearer God."

"Why thus do the Italians take action against the Senoussi?"

"Because the man who follows our teaching becomes healthy in body and mind. The Italians are interested in making the entire population of Cyrenaica degenerate, as in so many places in the world of Islam. If that happens, the Italian civilisation can advance

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more rapidly. So long as our teaching rules, it will not happen."

"Why not?"

"Our teaching is not intolerant towards any other form of Islam or towards any other religion. It is simplicity itself: the body must be strengthened by a healthy and abstemious life, so that it becomes a worthy dwelling for the soul. You are not permitted to enjoy any narcotics, not even tobacco. You must be a slave of nothing save God, that is, you must be the master of circumstances. The civilisation which the Italians want to introduce into Cyrenaica makes us the slave of circumstances: therefore, we must fight against it."

"How does it make us slaves of circumstances?"

"It overestimates the outward technical progress, machinery, it makes external splendour and power the ruling factor in the judgment of a person or nation, and it despises the inner development. I can only tell you that where the Senoussi rules there is peace and contentment on all sides."

"What do you think of the future?"

"It looks very dull. Turkey as an Islamic State exists no longer. Mustapha Kamal has finished with religion and thinks that a strong Turkey must be built without it."

"And in Egypt?"

"You are here now; see for yourself, then you can judge."

I went back to my hotel. The road lead through the prostitutes' quarter. European jazz music filled the street; in all the doorways stood brown, yellow, white prostitutes with heavily powdered faces. In the middle of it all, an electric piano wailed out the *Moonlight Sonata*; half the notes were missing and the sonata became a thing of staccato, halting horror. Men of all

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racers and all tongues slouched through these streets, followed by the monstrous cries of the women. Three drunken German sailors were hauled into a house by a woman who tried to cover the ravages of fifty years beneath a thick layer of paint. Little boys slunk guiltily about looking with curious eyes on this hell which seemed to them to be heaven itself. Dirt, brawling and disputes were on every side. I emerged from the narrow streets filled with an indescribable odour of whisky, incense and sweating bodies, and passed the last prostitute, sitting on a step, her eyes dilated with cocaine. Soon I reached my hotel. Here was peace. Outside the Cafés men were smoking their *hookahs*, while they discussed the events of the day. In the distance I saw Ibrahim Pasha Square where the trams tear along and I could hear the honking of the cars. High above my head from a minaret belonging to a blue-cupolaed mosque the muezzin called to prayer, and above it all shone the slender crescent moon. . . .

“And truly I had seen Africa and the desperate struggle of its inhabitants to hold what is their own.

“The sun was rising. The morning mist lay round the tops of the Riff mountains; in the deep valleys was darkness. Here it was that a handful of brave mountaineers fought under Abd-el-Krim.

“The boat headed north towards the luxury and comfort which civilisation has created. But as I gazed at the African coast receding slowly from sight, my heart ached for the poor, hardy people whom I had learnt to know, and for their hopeless struggle. Perhaps justice will be victorious some day—a justice which is not a rapacious lust for power, but which radiates the urge to comprehend all that is beautiful on the whole earth. And surely Kipling was only superficially right when he said, ‘East is East and West is West.’ Deep down with-

in themselves the people of the East and West are alike. They are two branches of the same tree.

“And when man, regardless of whence he comes, seeks deep in his heart, he will feel the longing for the root of the tree.”

IF THE CHRISTIANS WILL SEE

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

“The heavens may almost be rent thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in pieces.

“That they ascribe a Son to the Beneficent God.”

—*The Holy Qur-án*, 19:90 and 91.

The great sin of worshipping a mere human being instead of the Great God, and especially of establishing the blasphemous relationship of son and father between him and the Supreme Being, has brought its punishment on the nations of Christendom. Their seeming prosperity is the Devil's snare, behind which is hidden the hellish life which the peoples of Christendom are leading.

The worship of a frail creature of God has completely *obscured the sense of the real God* in their minds, and consequently all their emotions are wandering aimlessly in the blind alley of materialism. The impending political catastrophe, however, has aroused an anxiety in thinking minds. Various sermons are being preached urging the necessity of a change in the mental outlook of the people, and yet, to the great misfortune of Christendom, nobody has the courage to say that all their miseries have their origin in the polytheism of their religious creed.

Let me emphatically declare, on behalf of the religion of Muhammad, that the people of the West can have no escape from the calamities which their misguid-

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ed beliefs have brought upon them, unless they turn to God with genuine repentance and recognize Him in His unsullied glory of Oneness. No longer are they the barbarians of the Middle Ages, and they can very well weigh facts and figures presented to them. We Muslims have been doing our best to disillusion their minds and to enable them to have a clear vision of the One True God. Urged by a sense of duty towards our fellow creatures, we have been discussing this matter from various angles, but, so far, instead of listening to our arguments with the object of profiting by them, the majority of Christians have produced further intellectual tangles to deceive themselves and others. Nevertheless, we shall not cease trying to help them out of their intellectual confusion in the hope that, even at the last hour, the doom may be averted. Here therefore is a new indication. May they see the light and humble themselves!

The acts and sayings of Jesus, as they are given in the gospels, have nothing in them that can in any way be called extraordinary. It is the ignorance of the religious traditions of other nations that make them appear something superhuman to the Christian eye.

Take, for example, the miracles, which are one of the chief bases of the claim of divinity, advanced on behalf of Jesus. Islamic tradition alone contains far more remarkable and numerous miracles, ascribed indeed to the ordinary saints, than the ones contained in the records of the gospels—and Islam was born and grew in the broad daylight of history. Even more than over the miracles, Christian controversialists wax eloquent about the spiritual courage of their Christ while facing his crucifixion. According to the Christian theory, this tragic event was a premeditated and pre-ordained affair, which had the willing assent of Christ as the second per-

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son in the Divinity. As a matter of fact, this was to be the crowning glory of their joint career, as by this one stroke of policy they were going to reconcile the eternal conflict between the Divine qualities of Mercy and Justice, at least as far as humanity was concerned.

As an assenting party to the affair, and more so as a person in the mysterious Divine Trinity, Christ ought at that moment of trial to have shown a courage which would compare favourably with others—with no higher claims than that of being human beings—under similar conditions. To our great disappointment, however, we find the Jesus of the Gospels presenting at that moment a character inferior to those of many martyrs who have died for a noble cause. We remember how cheerfully Socrates drank the cup of hemlock given to him by the then Greek justice: and thousands like him can be found in the secular and religious history of all nations; but, reverting to the history of Islam and confining ourselves to that part of it which deals with persons having religious experience, we come to one incident which greatly resembles the tragic fate of Jesus of Nazareth. This is the case of Mansur, otherwise known as Hallāj. Like Jesus, he was born in the midst of a people that had forgotten the traditions of direct communion with the Living God, and like him also, in moments of these great experiences, he uttered words that were misconstrued as a claim to divinity; finally, like Jesus again, he was condemned to death by his Pharisaic co-religionists.

That happened in the year 922 of the Christian era. To complete the comparison, it is of great interest to place side by side their utterances while facing their respective trials. The words of Jesus, while approaching his trial, as they are recorded in the Gospels are: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from

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me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. . . . O My Father, if this cannot pass away except I drink it, Thy will be done."

The utterance of Hallāj, the great Muslim mystic, on the other hand, while facing his execution, as quoted by Professor R. A. Nicholson in his book "Essay on Mysticism", is as follows: "And these Thy servants who are gathered to slay me, in zeal for Thy religion and in desire to win Thy favour, forgive them, O Lord, and have mercy upon them: for verily if Thou hadst revealed to them that which Thou hast revealed to me, they would not have done what they have done: and if Thou hadst hidden from me that which Thou hast hidden from them, I should not have suffered this tribulation! Glory unto Thee in whatsoever Thou doest, and glory unto Thee in whatsoever Thou willest."

It will be of absorbing interest for the Christians to learn that the allegation against Mansur Hallāj, the Muslim mystic, was that he claimed to be God. The utterances that formed the basis of such an allegation have nothing new in them from the enlightened Muslim point of view. It is the same old story of the experience of the human soul overwhelmed by the effulgence of Divine Light. It is only the uninitiated, who, like the Muslim compatriots of Hallāj and the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus, living on the surface of religious practices, see in them any wilful blasphemy. On the other hand, it is only the pagan mind that sees in these utterances any valid claim to Divinity. To the credit of the Muslims it must be said that if, at certain times, they, like the Jews, have committed the mistake in precaution, they have never committed the blunder of worshipping a man on the basis of utterances even more extravagant than those of Jesus.

If mystical exclamations, accompanied by consistently facing the physical torture that may come as a

consequence, may be regarded as anything like an established claim to Divinity, certainly the Muslim saint, Hallāj, is a far greater deity (may God pardon me for this expression) than Jesus of Nazareth (on whom rest the peace of God).

A TRIBUTE TO MUHAMMAD*

BY AL-HAJJA A'ISHA WENTWORTH-FITZWILLIAM

Your Royal Highness,—

I am going more particularly to address the non-Muslims who are not as well acquainted with the noble character and life of the Holy Prophet as are many others here.

The Prophet Muhammad's character and qualities were those which appeal especially to my own countrymen and women,—namely, courage, loyalty, kindness and the greatest generosity to a fallen foe. His courage was exceptional. At the commencement of his great work, he stood entirely alone, his clansmen and even his family were against him, and he fought for his cause against apparently overwhelming odds. It was his courage and faith in Allah that brought him victory.

Previous to the days of the Prophet, the Arabians had sunk to the lowest degree—drunkenness, immorality and idolatry were at their height. The Kaaba, which, since the days of Abraham, had been used as the House of God (Beit Allah) was filled with idols of stone and wood which the Arabs worshipped. All this the Prophet changed.

Not one of the least courageous things he did was to smash all these idols (365), and while surrounded by enemies hurl them out of the Kaaba. I think that anyone who has been to Mecca can picture that scene

*A speech delivered on the celebration of the Holy Prophet's Birthday in London.

A TRIBUTE TO MUHAMMAD

and realise the danger to the Prophet and the courage it required.

Mentioning Mecca, I should like to say here that it seems to me a grand thing that the holy cities of Arabia, Mecca and Medina, are again being visited by Occidentals as well as by Orientals. This is as it was in the days of the Prophet. Everybody desires world peace; well, there is nothing which will better accomplish that than the festival at the end of the Pilgrimage at Arafat, where all nationalities—black, white, brown, yellow—all dressed alike, kings, beggars, poor and rich, side by side, offer up one universal hymn of praise to Allah. Surely this *equality* should encourage world peace. But to return to our original theme.

On account of excessive drunkenness, the Prophet banned intoxicants. Further, he was the first Prophet to elevate the status of women. Up to that time women had no real status; in fact, the Arabs used to bury their female babies alive. All this the Prophet stopped and instituted laws, 1,356 years ago, establishing woman's rights that, alas, do not exist yet in some European countries. To this day, in the Islamic laws which the Prophet introduced, a woman's possessions, whether money, land or anything else, are her own; even her husband cannot lay hands on them. There is a great misconception among Christians as regards women in Islam. For example many Europeans have said to me "Oh, according to your Prophet, you have no soul." How this fallacy has crept into the Christian imagination is incomprehensible, because it is the reverse of all Muhammad's teachings, as the Prophet was always equalizing man and woman.

I cannot do better than finish by quoting an Englishman, Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole. Writing about the Prophet, he says: "There is something so tender and withal so heroic about the man . . . he who, standing

alone braved for years the hatred of his people—the frank friendship, the noble generosity, the dauntless courage and hope of the man . . . he was an enthusiast in the noblest sense when enthusiasm became the salt of the earth . . . and his enthusiasm was noble for a noble cause. He brought his tidings to his people with a grand dignity sprung from the consciousness of his high office, together with a most sweet humility.” Thus wrote a man who was *not* a Muslim.

CORRESPONDENCE

To

THE EDITOR,
THE OBSERVER,
LONDON, E.C. 4.

SIR,

Allow me to draw your attention to the article, “Harem of the East,” by Major C. S. Jarvis, published in your issue of the 28th March.

I can quite understand the weakness in the ordinary man to pander to the feelings of amusement in the popular mind. But I cannot congratulate a responsible politician who indulges in it at the cost of the great political interests of the country and the nation. Major Jarvis seems to forget that the Muslims are far in excess of the Christians in the British Empire, their number being 110 millions, as also the fact that owing to the growing complications in European politics the British Government has more and more to rely on the good-will, not only of its Muslim subjects, but also on the rest of the Muslim world.

It is no political wisdom, therefore, to continue the old propaganda of ridicule and misrepresentation about the Islamic Faith.

While writing derisively about the seclusion and veil, the Major forgets that these are neither in the Islamic Law nor in universal practice. It is only an infinitesimal proportion of the Muslim world, the aristocracy, whose women, as an insignia of their high birth, do not like to be seen by Dick, Tom and Harry. But the rest of the Muslim women of the world do not see the necessity of this overdose of self-consciousness. They neither wear veils nor stop idly at home.

On the question of polygamy, again, the Major forgets that it is as much a Christian as it is a Muslim system, and that the inflexible Law of Monogamy in Christendom is an innovation of pagan origin that has brought innumerable corruptions to society. As Schopenhauer has said, polygamy exists *de facto* everywhere. Muhammad, anxious for the safety of womanhood, would not, on pain of severe punishment, allow any polygamous union without an open legal undertaking, whereas the

CORRESPONDENCE

legislators of Christendom take a light view of the subject; that is the only difference. Indeed, a higher view of the subject would enable any sensible man to see that rather than having his "tongue in his mouth," Muhammad, in insisting on an equal treatment of all wives in a polygamous family, was, in a subtle way, safeguarding this permission from an abuse in sexual indulgence.

As a matter of fact, Muslims, men and women, have all along considered this permission for polygamy as an exhortation for charity and sacrifice in domestic life, in the interests of the economic and the moral health of society. It is for this reason that polygamous marriages have all throughout Islamic history been rare, and not at all frequent, as is suggested by the article in question.

I fail to understand what makes the Major think that Muslim women are treated as chattel. I wish he had read the authoritative views of Judge Crabites of the U.S.A. on this subject. He is an authority on Law, and he has acted as a judge in Egypt for a long time. He asserts with a challenge that the legal and economic freedom of Muslim women is unapproached by the most advanced laws even of advanced America.

What is most surprising, however, in the whole article, is that the Major should take pleasure in the fact that the pernicious Western propaganda of the modern times has been breaking down the reserve and restraint between the sexes in Muslim countries as they have done here in the West; as if that is something to be proud of. The Major does not seem to have heard the words of the Primate recalling the nation to religion.

In conclusion, I may remind the Major that the term "man-made laws" is applicable to the current laws of Christendom, since they are actually the products of secular and lay minds, but not to the laws of Islam, for they were given by a Prophet of God through the agency of *Revelation*.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD,
Imam, The Mosque, Woking.
CANFORD CLIFFS,
DORSET.

THE SECRETARY,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Some time ago you sent me some literature about Islam, which I have read with interest.

In the letter which accompanied the literature you offered to send me a translation of the Qur-án Sherif. Now I hardly feel justified in accepting such an offer, but I should be much obliged if you would let me have a copy of the *Islamic Review* of July 1936. I ask for this particular number because I have seen notices of articles in it which I think would be of interest to me.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) A. H. R.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

King Faruque at the Shah Jehan Mosque

Quite informally, on Friday, the 28th May, His Majesty King Faruque of Egypt came to the mosque to attend the congregational prayers. He arrived at 1 p.m., accompanied by his tutor, His Excellency Sir Hasanain Bey, and other members of his personal staff.

A few minutes before the royal car had arrived, another car from His Majesty's Embassy in London had brought the Chargé d'Affaires, the Consul, and other important members of the Embassy. The President and the office-bearers of the Muslim Society in Great Britain had arrived earlier to receive, with the Imam, the royal visitor and his suite at the Sir Salar Jung Memorial House. For fifteen minutes, till the *Azan* (the call to prayer) was sounded by the muezzin, the members of the congregation, belonging to various nationalities of the East and of the West, were introduced to the royal guest. At the end of the prayers, at the request of the Imam, His Majesty very kindly condescended to join the congregation at an informal tea at the Salar Jung Memorial House.

It would have astonished a Christian observer that, in the absence of any reserved seat or pew, the King squatted on the carpeted floor of the mosque, just like the humblest of the congregation, and secured a seat for himself without the slightest display of his distinguished social position. To the Muslims there was nothing remarkable in this, but the thoughtful among them felt an increased gratitude to God that after nearly 14 centuries, this important aspect of the Prophet Muhammad's traditions is continuing undefiled. They also realised afresh that this equality in the sight of God is the only hope for the continuance of civilised society.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

His Majesty and the party left the mosque at a quarter to three.

The London Nizamiah Mosque

On the afternoon of Friday, June 4th, in the presence of notable Muslims from all parts of the world, His Highness Prince Azam Jah Bahadur of Berar, the heir-apparent to His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, Deccan, India, laid the foundation-stone of the long-anticipated Nizamiah Mosque, on the site bought for the purpose in the year 1930, in Mornington Avenue, West Kensington.

Thus the dream of Lord Headley, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and Sir Abbas Ali Baig, of blessed memory, the original Trustees of this Fund, is well on the way to materialisation. It was Lord Headley who, as a British Muslim, first felt the anomaly of the lack of an appropriate mosque in the Metropolis of the Empire, the Muslim population of which far exceeded the Christian population. His keen solicitude in the matter, though it failed to bring any response from the Home Government, nevertheless found an effective supporter in the person of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. The whole of the London Nizamiah Mosque Fund owes its existence directly or indirectly to that proverbially rich and generous Muslim ruler. It was fitting, therefore, that his son and heir-apparent should be asked to lay the foundation-stone of the mosque, and it was also time that the construction of this mosque should be started in real earnest.

We congratulate the present Trustees on this timely move, and pray to Allah that, through their earnest efforts, London may soon see the completion of its long-discussed Nizamiah Mosque.

PRECIOUS GEMS

SAYINGS OF MUHAMMAD

1. Convey to others no words of mine save those you know for a certainty.
2. Islam consisteth in cherishing the profoundest respect for the commandments of Allah and extending sympathy to His creatures.
3. Verily there is a piece of flesh in the body of man, and when it is good, the whole body is good; but when bad, the whole body is bad—and beware! it is the Heart.
4. Actions shall be judged according to motives.
5. No man is true in the truest sense of the word save he who is true in word, in deed, and in thought.
6. One who is young shall not attain to Paradise by neglecting his parents when they are old.
7. Paradise lieth at the feet of the mother.
8. Dost thou love thy Creator? Love thy fellow-creatures first.
9. Who is the most favoured of God? He from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures.
10. Modesty and chastity form parts of the Islamic Faith.

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